

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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SUBJ: DPC MEETING MARCH 13 - RESTRUCTURING DANISH FORCES

TEXT OF DPC CONCLUSIONS ON PROPOSED CHANGES IN DANISH
DEFENSE REACHED AT MARCH 13 DPC MEETING IS QUOTED BELOW.
TEXT IS UNCLASSIFIED AND IS BEING PASSED BY NATO TO DANISH
AUTHORITIES. BEGIN QUOTE:

THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF NATO HAS CONSIDERED
THE CHANGES PROPOSED IN THE STRUCTURE OF DANISH ARMED FORCES
AS COMMUNICATED TO THEM IN THE LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY GENERAL BY THE DANISH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ON
19 TH FEBRUARY, AND THE ADDITIONAL DETAILS PRESENTED IN THE
COURSE OF DISCUSSION IN THEIR COMMITTEE AND IN THE MILITARY
COMMITTEE.

2. THEY RECOGNISE THAT THESE PROPOSALS REPRESENT AN IMPROVEMENT
OVER THOSE ORIGINALLY PUT FORWARD IN 1972. THEY NOTE THE INTENTION
TO RESTORE OVER THE COMING FOUR YEAR PERIOD THE SAVINGS MADE IN
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DANISH DEFENCE EXENDITURE AS PART OF A GENERAL CUT IN PUBLIC

EXPENDITURES. THEY ALSO NOTE WITH SATISFACTION THE INTENTION OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE REACHING FINAL DECISIONS THE RESULTS OF THE NATO CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT UNDER THE ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES.

3. HOWEVER, THEY NOTE WITH GRAVE CONCERN THE GENERAL CONCLUSION OF THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES THAT THE RSTRUCTURING PROPOSALS WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE DEFENCE CAPABILITY OF THE DANISH ARMED FORCES, AND WOULD WEAKEN THE COLLECTIVE DEFENCE OF THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE, PARTICULARLY ON THE NORTHERN REGULAR PERSONNEL AND TO IMPROVE THE TRAINING OF CONSCRIPTS AND TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL DEFENCE FORCES. NEVERTHELESS THEY EXPRESSED CONCERN AT:

(A) THE PROPOSED REDUCTION IN THE PERIOD OF CONSCRIPT SERVICE WHICH WOULD DIMINISH THE EFFECTIVENESS OF UNITS MANNED MAINLY BY CONSCRIPTS AND RESERVE PERSONNEL.

(B) THE REDUCED SIZE OF STANDING FORCES, AND THE INCREASED RELIANCE ON TROOPS TO BE RECALLED IN AN EMERGENCY TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED LEVEL OF FORCES, COUPLED WITH THE LACK OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY AND READINESS OF SUCH FORCES.

(C) THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE CHANGES WOULD REQUIRE A HIGHER PROPORTION OF THE DEFENCE BUDGET TO BE DEVOTED TO PERSONNEL, RESULTING IN A FURTHER REDUCTION IN THE ALREADY INADEQUATE RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO MUCH- NEEDED RE- EQUIPMENT AND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE QUALITY OF FORCES.

(D) THE ABSENCE OF FIRM PLANS FOR REPLACEMENT OF OBSOLESCEANT AIRCRAFT, SHIPS AND TANKS, AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS AS CALLED FOR IN NATO'S AD 70 REVIEW.

(E) OVERALL REDUCTIONS IN FORCE CAPABILITIES WHICH MAY CAST DOUBT ON THE DANISH ABILITY TO DEFEND THE RECEPTION AND DEPLOYMENT AREAS WHILE REINFORCEMENT AND SUPPORT PLANS ARE PUT INTO EFFECT.

(F) THE ANTICIPATED DETERIORATION IN THE CAPABILITY OF DANISH FORCES TO CONTROL THE BALTIC EXITS AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER NATIONS WITH INTERESTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS AREA.

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4. THEY ALSO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE RESULTANT TREND IN THE TOTAL EXPENDITURE OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT ON DEFENCE, IN RELATION TO THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT. IN THIS SENSE THEY CONCLUDED THAT THE SCALE OF DENMARK'S MILITARY CONTRIBUTION TO THE ALLIANCE, IN COMPARISON WITH MOST OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES, WOULD BE SCARCELY COMMENSURATE WITH HER OWN STRATEGIC SITUATION OR WITH THE RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY.

5. FINALLY THE COMMITTEE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE THE DANISH PROPOSALS WITH THE NATO DECLARATION OF 1968, RE- ENDORSED BY NATO MINISTERS AS RECENTLY AS DECEMBER 1972, THAT " THE OVERALL MILITARY CAPABILITY OF NATO SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED EXCEPT AS PART OF A PATTERN OF MUTUAL FORCE REDUCTIONS BALANCED IN SCOPE AND TIMING". THEY RE- EMPHASISED THE OVERRIDING NEED FOR ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES TO MAINTAIN THE SOLIDARITY OF THE ALLIANCE, IN MILITARY AS WELL AS IN POLITICAL TERMS, AT THE PRESENT JUNCTURE IN EAST/ WEST RELATIONS.

6. THE NATO DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

(A) INVITED THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO CONVEY THESE VIEWS, REPRESENTING THE CONSENSUS OF ALLIED OPINION ON THE DANISH PROPOSALS, TO THE DANISH GOVERNMENT;

(B) INVITED THE DANISH GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE DANISH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, TO REVIEW THEIR PROPOSALS IN THE LIGHT OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED. RUMSFELD

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